

Strategies for Setting Goals Using Stages of Change

The answers the client gives to the readiness to change questions should be used when considering the goals to set. The stages of change correlate with the order of the answer choices.

Readiness to Change Questions:

1. Do you eat at least 5 or more servings (at least 2 ½ cups) of vegetables each day?
2. Do you eat at least 4 or more servings (2 cups) of fruits each day?
3. Do you exercise 4 or more times a week for at least 30 minutes a day?

	Answer	Stages of Change	Goal Strategies
A.	Yes, I have been for more than 6 months	Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue reinforcement. Ask what strategies have been helpful and what situations problematic.
B.	Yes, I have been, but for less than 6 months	Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce decision. Ask what else is needed for success.
C.	No, but intend to in the next 30 days	Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage client's efforts. Help client to set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Focused.)
D.	No, but intend to in the next 6 months	Contemplation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elicit from the client reasons to change and the consequences of not changing. Praise client for considering the difficulties of change. Question possible solutions for one challenge at a time. Pose advice gently to avoid natural resistance.
E.	No, and I do not intend to in the next 6 months	Pre-contemplation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use relationship building skills Personalize risk factors Express concern instead of using scare tactics Use teachable moments Educate in small bits, repeatedly over time